The Lusaka Regional Conference
1 – 2 November 2008

Lusaka conference participants pose for a group photo before heading home. People came from all nine provinces of Zambia and from neighboring Malawi and Zimbabwe.

Four of the five African chiefs who attended the Lusaka conference gather during a break. All are Baha’is who support the local community-building efforts.

Group meetings during the conference brought together Baha’is of different clusters to discuss the launching of intensive programs of growth.

Maina Mkandawire, right, a Continental Counsellor from Malawi, consults with other conference participants. Garth Pollock of Zambia was another Continental Counsellor in attendance, and Chuungu Malitonga was introduced as a newly named Counsellor for the region.

Music and drumming, both spontaneous and as part of performances during conference sessions, added to the spirit of the gathering.

Sehla Masunda, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of Zimbabwe, was one of 80 Baha’is from her country to attend the conference in Lusaka.

The people at the conference shared experiences, made plans for the future, and enjoyed the music, drumming and dancing that were a key feature of the gathering.

Uransaikhan Baatar, a Counsellor from Mongolia currently serving at the Baha'i World Centre, addresses the gathering. She attended as a representative of the Universal House of Justice.

Counsellor Stephen Birkland, left, representing the Universal House of Justice, introduced Chuungu Malitonga of Zambia as a new Continental Counsellor in Africa.

As the conference ended, one participant said: “It was such an amazing experience to see (hundreds of) Baha’is joyfully gathering together…. I am very tired but very happy.”

The Nakuru Regional Conference
8 – 9 November 2008

Young people are key participants in the gatherings.

More than half the people at the Nakuru conference live in Kenya, but big groups also came from Uganda, Tanzania, and Ethiopia. A few Baha'is were able to travel from Mozambique and Southern Sudan.

Statistics from the Debrezeit cluster in Ethiopia are given during the presentation of action plans.

This workshop was for planning an intensive program of growth in the Bumula cluster in Kenya.

Joy Mboya of Nairobi, Kenya, takes the microphone during one of the activities.

Friends from Ethiopia get into the spirit with their dancing.

The workshops involved specific planning for activities in goal clusters.

Uransaikhan Baatar and Rachel Ndegwa attended the conference as representatives of the Universal House of Justice.

Goodard Ruta, left, of Tanzania listens intently during a plenary session.

Breakout sessions gave everyone a chance to get involved individually in the planning.

The exuberance of the conference was often reflected in music and movement.

The Johannesburg Regional Conference 8 – 9 November 2008

Participants young and old got into the spirit, repeatedly breaking into spontaneous applause or song.

Messages from the Universal House of Justice were consulted upon in workshop sessions.

Maina Mkandawire, left, and Eddy Lutchmaya, right, both Continental Counsellors, flank Joan Lincoln and Stephen Birkland, who attended as representatives of the Universal House of Justice.

Drummers provide rhythm and add excitement to the gathering.

Andre Ross and Joan Lincoln sing “Will You Give Your Heart to Baha’u’llah?” Mrs. Lincoln wrote the song for a youth conference in the United States in 1970.

Friends from Lesotho consult during a workshop.

Baha’is from Seychelles, a nation archipelago in the Indian Ocean, were among the participants.

Young people took full part in the conference.

Baha’is from Indian Ocean islands participate in a workshop.

Many of those attending were youth – and a good number were new Baha’is.

Friends from Swaziland and South Africa pose together for a photo.

Krish Naidoo of South Africa facilitates one of the workshops.

Workshops allowed friends to consult together about upcoming activities in specific clusters.

“I have been a Baha’i a long time … and I have never seen what I’ve seen this weekend,” said a woman from Botswana.